

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 9, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Majority Leader
H-107, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Hoyer, Chairman Rangel, Chairman Waxman, and Chairman Miller:

We are writing to request a meeting with House Democratic Leadership as soon as possible. We would like to discuss the current inequities in Medicare reimbursement and our strong belief that this issue must be addressed in any health care reform legislation that will be voted on by the House.

We represent states in which the quality of care exceeds the national average and per-beneficiary fee-for-service Medicare costs are substantially lower than the national average. Our "low-cost, high-quality" states are setting the national standard for Medicare, yet we are penalized by the current Medicare reimbursement formula. Furthermore, any public insurance option that is based on Medicare's current reimbursement formula would only result in an unacceptable further penalization of our states.

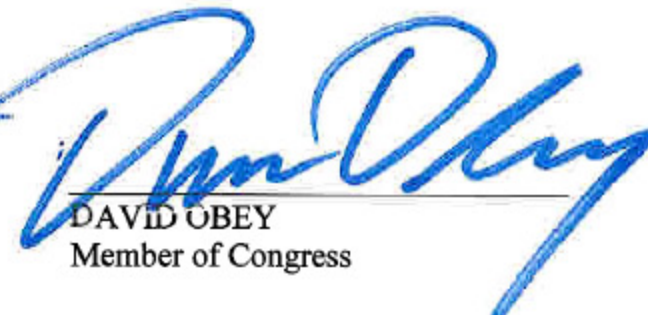
The draft House Tri-Committee health care legislation takes steps towards rewarding the efficient delivery of care. We urge even greater steps to incentivize high-quality, cost-effective patient care. Addressing decades of inequitable Medicare payments, ensuring an opportunity for all states to deliver efficient and effective care, and rewarding even higher levels of performance are all necessary measures for any health care reform bill to be successful in the House.

Recently twenty-eight members of the House sent a bipartisan letter to House Leadership urging action to address Medicare geographic disparities in reimbursement. It is our hope that this letter and our request for a meeting provides Democratic leadership the impetus to work with us. We all recognize the urgent need to reform health care, but it will be very difficult for us to support legislation that ignores this critical issue and allows our states to continue to be penalized by an outdated Medicare formula.

We look forward to working with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,


BETTY MCCOLLUM
Member of Congress


DAVID OBEY
Member of Congress

cc: President Barack Obama
Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius




BRUCE BRALEY
Member of Congress



DAVID LOEBSACK
Member of Congress



STEVE KAGEN
Member of Congress



DAVID WU
Member of Congress



LEONARD BOSWELL
Member of Congress



MICHAEL H. MICHAUD
Member of Congress



RICK LARSEN
Member of Congress



NORMAN DICKS
Member of Congress



BRIAN BAIRD
Member of Congress



CAROL SHEA-PORTER
Member of Congress



EARL POMEROY
Member of Congress



JAMES OBERSTAR
Member of Congress



TIM WALZ
Member of Congress



PAUL HODES
Member of Congress



ADAM SMITH
Member of Congress



KURT SCHRADER
Member of Congress



GERALD. E. CONNOLLY
Member of Congress



KEITH ELLISON
Member of Congress



BART GORDON
Member of Congress